1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

fashioned iron hoes for cultivation and spears for hunting and war; they also made the cow-bells with which rich men loved to decorate their cattle. Doctors were equally important, for the medicines supplied by them were believed to influence health, fertility, and success in every undertaking. Neither smiths nor doctors served only their own home villages—the number of smiths was much smaller than the number of villages—and doctors living at a distance were generally preferred to those living near by. The need for iron goods and for medicines therefore took men out of their own villages and made links with other villages, often in other chiefdoms. Some at least of the iron ore which the smiths smelted was obtained from the distant Kinga mountains outside the Nyakyusa area all together (*vide supra*, p. 7), and many medicines came from the Kinga or Sangu. *Umwafi* for the poison ordeal was bought from Ngonde. Three other commodities also came from far—these were salt, which Kinga bought from Bena country and sold to the Nyakyusa; a red root (*ikipimba*) used as a dye and cosmetic, bought by the Mahasi from the Sangu and sold to the Nyakyusa; and brass or copper wire for making body rings (*amanyeta*).[1] There was scarcely any cloth in the country when the Europeans first arrived.[2] Pots were sold throughout the Lake-shore plain by the Kisi—Thomson found the Kisi pot-market operating in 1879[3]—and in the hills by Penja specialists. The details of this trade will be discussed when we come to consider the wider relations of the Nyakyusa: here we are only concerned to show that though villagers were dependent on outsiders for a little iron and salt, together with some medicines and ornaments, the bulk of the trade remained very small—salt and iron were extremely scarce—and economic relations beyond the village and kinship group were tenuous.

[1] We do not know by what route the wire came in: it is possible that it was as scarce as cloth before the first contact with Europeans. Elton speaks of spear shafts 'beautifully inlaid with a delicate tracery of brass and copper wire' (op. cit., p. 323), but the first reference we have traced to *amanyeta* in Nyakyusa country is in D. Kerr-Cross 'Crater-lakes north of Lake Nyasa', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. V (1895), p. 118, his observation having been made in 1893. At that time he says 'you could buy anything for brass wire'. c.f. Moir, op. cit., p. 89. Fotheringham (op. cit., p. 27) says that the brass wire used in Ngonde (before 1889) was imported from Britain.

[2] Elton, op. cit., pp. 316, 320, 322, 331; Thomson, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 268, 274.

[3] Thomson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 263. The market was at Pupangenda, at the N.E. corner of the Lake, on the narrow strip of land between the escarpment of the Livingstones and the water.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

764 and sniffed at the grave. When this son-in-law arrived, the chief women mourners got up from under the tree and went with him into the hut to wail. They came out all wailing. The women under the tree were wailing all the time with a leader standing up in the middle. But the wailing was drowned by the drums of which there were three sets.

764 Three young men were got up with white clay spots and some had
535 bells on their ankles and loin-cloths. They held spears, and danced and
302 leapt wildly. 'What', I asked Kasitile, 'is the meaning of the white clay?'

KASITILE: It is war paint. During war we painted ourselves with white clay formerly. Then if I saw one with white clay I did not spear him. It was my comrade. But he whom I saw without it was an enemy and I speared him. It was the sign.

725 QUESTION: But did the other side not use it?

KASITILE: We took them by surprise.

Mwanyoso came to visit me in the evening.

764 QUESTION: And what steps are they taking about Katuaya's death
789 from sorcery?

MWANYOSO: They sought the doctor, Mwangolombe, for the burial yesterday. He pounded a medicine and burnt it on the grave. Then they buried the dead man and danced on the grave. That means they destroyed the sorcery. The dead man should take it away with him.

QUESTION: And has the doctor given them medicines to drink?

MWANYOSO: He has not yet done so. They will fetch him again to cook the medicine at the home.

QUESTION: What about the payment?

● 759 MWANYOSO: For yesterday they did not pay anything, now, but when they have fetched him to their home, then they will pay some shillings. But if many people have died, then they fetch a famous doctor such as Mwakionde. Then he comes with all the protective medicines (*amapingo*) and treats them. Then such a doctor gets a cow. The famous doctors in this country are Mwakionde and Kapuguso and Mwakanyamale.

787 QUESTION: Will they consult an oracle?

MWANYOSO: Why should they consult an oracle? They know what it is. It is the sorcery of their brothers!

754 QUESTION: But it might be the sorcery of another. Some say of Mwaihojo (the chief).

MWANYOSO: They are liars. See, Katasya had just come from his brothers. He got the illness at their place. It is they. If it was from Mwaihojo and his people, they would have speared him by night. We would have found wounds and much blood, but we did not find them.

QUESTION: He came from his brothers?

MWANYOSO: Yes, there was a ritual because their father, Mwaikilaja, had died. Their senior brother inherited and he also died. Katasya

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

have often regretted, not because the European did not cure me, but because I missed an opportunity of testing the native. 757

A European well known in the country told me recently that in 1901 he was cured of black-water fever by a native doctor on the Zambesi. Water boiled with roasted rice was given him in large quantities, and a small sack, filled with boiled leaves of a tree not known to me, was bound around the abdomen. His recovery was rapid, and he has himself successfully used the same cure in other cases. Another European was cured of persistent dysentery by an old native doctor.

Doubtless there is much pretence; drugs are administered without real knowledge; but in the main the doctors are honourable men, fulfilling an important place in the life of the community, relieving much pain, and achieving striking successes, which are too well authenticated to admit of doubt. That in many cases they ruin the patient for life, is unfortunately also only too true. But however that may be, they have not forfeited the confidence of the people. The advent of the scientifically trained European doctor has diminished indeed, but by no means destroyed, the influence of his African confrère in science. Hundreds still consult the native doctor, many in preference to, and not a few after having tried, the white man's medicine. A medical friend of mine tells a good story against himself. He was asked by one of his own employees for the loan of two shillings; but the applicant was most unwilling to tell what the 759

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

759 money was to be used for. It came out, however, that it was to pay a native doctor, to whom he was taking his wife for consultation! The native's fee was two shillings. The fee at the dispensary would not have been one-tenth of that sum, but the patient preferred the high fee and the unqualified adviser. Nor is this surprising, when it is remembered that so much of the troubles which afflict the native, are believed to be due to the interference of spirits, with which the European doctor will have nothing to do; while the Konde doctor will consult them as part at least, if not the whole, of his diagnosis. Hence the confidence in him. He is in touch with the sources of the trouble.

759 789 And this same conviction, that the native doctors are in touch with the sources of the trouble, leads to some of the most foolish beliefs of the common people, and of the most mischievous practices of the doctors. It is the source of the absurd confidence in the power of medicine to turn bullets into water, for example. In 1897 medicine was prepared which would cause the white man, in what was then the Neu Langenburg area, to disappear. It is believed by many natives with whom I have been in touch, that some doctors are seeking for a " formula " to-day, which will succeed where the previous one so obviously failed; suggestive of a state of mind similar perhaps to that of our own alchemists of centuries ago; but suggestive also of a desire, at least in some quarters, to see the last of the white man.

757 782 Both the gathering of herbs, and the administration

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde_FN17

753 the use of both drugs and ceremonies. Next, the action of the spirits brings on diseases, and until the cause of their anger has been dealt with, no doctor will undertake to cure the patient. Wounds or injuries in battle, by falling trees, by attack of animals, or by any other means, may be due to any of the above causes.

759 The doctor may be a man or a woman. The fee varies from about a farthing to a sixty shilling cow, and the manner of payment varies also. In some cases payment precedes treatment; in others, it follows; and in still others the degree of cure effected decides the amount to be paid.

757 In what follows, no attempt is made at scientific classification; rather a rough grouping of symptoms guides the sequence of items. Medicines are usually administered in beer or in milk, hot or cold, according to the disease which is being treated. And the place where the decoction is drunk is very important; in snake bite, for instance, it is fatal for the patient to go inside the house before the medicine has been taken which it is hoped will save his life. A native Christian was, in 1913, suspended from ordinances for drinking medicine while seated on a banana stem at a place where two paths met.

828 757 278 Mental troubles of various kinds are treated, and not, I am assured, without success in some cases. *Maya* is grief, due to any cause. It is treated by giving an infusion of a plant called *nsabe*, not unlike paraley in appearance. The result is great cheerfulness in the patient, due, no doubt, to exhilarating qualities in